



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

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Commissioner Hyde-Smith Announces Funding Available for Organic Producers

Commissioner Cindy Hyde-Smith announced that the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) is currently offering a cost-share program for Mississippi organic producers and handlers receiving initial certification or continuation of certification by a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) accredited certifying agent.

Funding is available for those receiving certification between October 1, 2014 and September 30, 2015. Individual organic operators are eligible for reimbursement of 75 percent of their fiscal year 2015 certification costs up to a maximum of \$750 per category of certification. The National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program currently recognizes four categories of certification eligible for reimbursement: crops, wild crops, livestock and handler.

To be eligible for reimbursement, the following must be provided to MDAC by applicants: proof of certification issued by a USDA accredited certifying agent, a reimbursement form, an itemized invoice for certification-related expenses, an IRS W-9 form, and documentation of the payment in the form of a cancelled check. Applicants must be a Mississippi organic producer and handler located within the State of Mississippi. Funds are available on a first-come, first-serve basis until the funds are depleted. Operations may receive one reimbursement per year.

For more information about this program or to obtain an application, visit

<http://www.mdac.ms.gov/departments/marketing/organic.htm>, call Michael Lasseter at (601) 359-1120, or email michaelL@mdac.ms.gov.

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